

## Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG) program is to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. This is accomplished by making grants to organizations to provide technical assistance for business development or conduct economic development planning or training.

### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To receive an RBOG, you must be a public body, nonprofit corporation, Indian tribe, or cooperative with members that are primarily rural residents. You must have sufficient expertise in the activities you propose to carry out with the grant funds and financial strength to ensure you can accomplish the objectives of the proposed grant.

### MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF GRANT

The statutory limit is \$1.5 million, but the size of grants approved is limited by the amount of program funds available.

### ELIGIBLE USES

If awarded an RBOG, you may use the funds to pay costs of providing economic planning for rural communities, technical assistance for rural businesses, or training for rural entrepreneurs or economic development officials. You must be able to show that the funding will result in economic development of a rural area. Your project must include a basis for determining the success or failure of the project and assessing its impact.

For example, grant funds may be used for identify and analyze business opportunities, including feasibility studies and business plan studies, and to provide technical assistance to existing businesses, managers, and entrepreneurs. Grant funds may also be used to establish business support centers; conduct economic development planning; establish centers for training, technology and trade to develop trade opportunities and markets; and conduct leadership development training.

Grant funds may be not used to duplicate current services or substitute support previously provided. However, grant funds may be used to expand the level of existing effort or services, if the current level is inadequate. Grant funds may not be used for costs of real estate acquisition, development or building construction.

### APPLICATION INFORMATION

To develop an application, obtain a copy of the complete program regulation and refer to the application section. Briefly, an application must include a Form SF424.1, Application for Federal Assistance (for non-construction), a copy of your organizational documents, a scope of work, a written narrative, and a financial statement. Request for applications are announced on an annual basis in the Federal Register.

### APPLICATION SELECTION

The priority scoring system considers the sustainability and quality of the economic activity expected to result from the program; the extent to which the project is critical to a larger overall project; economic condition in the service area, such as recent loss of a major employer, long-term job deterioration, poverty, or population decline; and the project's usefulness as a new best practice.

### APPLICATION SUBMISSION

You may file applications with the USDA Rural Development State Office:  
Rural Development  
Attn: Business & Community Programs  
4949 Kirschling Court  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
(715) 345-7610 phone  
(715) 345-7616 fax

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You can obtain additional information, copies of the regulations, and forms by contacting the USDA Rural Development State Office at 715-345-7610. Visit us on the web at [www.rur.dev.usda.gov/wi](http://www.rur.dev.usda.gov/wi) or at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/buspb/bprogs.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/buspb/bprogs.htm).